

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

On page 1, above line 1, please insert the following paragraphs:

--CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Applicants claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 of German Application No. 102 53 832.8 filed November 18, 2002. Applicants also claim priority under 35 U.S.C. §365 of PCT/EP2003/012577 filed November 11, 2003. The international application under PCT article 21(2) was not published in English.--

On page 2, above the first full paragraph, please insert the following paragraphs:

--European Patent Application No. EP-A-0 486 427 discloses a disposable thermal shield for insulating vehicle parts, such as vehicle floor parts or vehicle dashboard parts, with a dimensionally stable support layer which supports a noise-absorbing thermal insulation layer and whose thermal insulating layer is provided with a protective coating at least on the side facing away from the support layer. The support layer, the thermal insulation layer and the protective coating are made from a material that is readily disposed of, particularly aluminium. In one of the several embodiments described, the thermal insulation layer is constructed in multiple plies and includes one or more plies made from a knitted aluminium fabric. In a

preferred embodiment, a partially perforated aluminium sheet is particularly used as the support layer. An aluminium foil is particularly provided as the protective coating.

A thermal shield for a motor vehicle underfloor is described in German Utility Model No. 89 00 894 U, in which an insulation layer is arranged on a panel-shaped support member, this layer being covered by a protective foil on the side facing away from the support member. The support member in this thermal shield has the form of a perforated sheet metal or a meshed metallic part. The insulation layer includes a thermal insulation mat, which in turn is made essentially from organic or mineral foams, a glass fibre construction or similar. Alternatively, wrinkled aluminium foil in one or more plies may be provided as the insulation layer.

European Patent Application No. EP-A-1 059 159 discloses a rigid, plastically deformable and particularly a deep-drawn composite material having at least one middle layer and two outer layers that cover the middle layer, the middle layer and the outer layers essentially being permanently attached over the entire surface thereof. The middle layer of the flat composite material has a textile structure, is compressible and may be stretched in at least one direction and is effective of damping noise and vibrations. The middle layer may particularly comprise a knitted aluminium fabric. The outer layers may consist of from

aluminium sheets or foils. This known composite material is further characterized in that the middle layer and the outer layer are glued together. Epoxy resin is used as the adhesive (bonding agent). Epoxy resin is applied by doctor on the middle layer, i.e. the middle layer is deep-impregnated with epoxy resin. Due to the bonding of the layers with epoxy resin a recycling of the composite material is impossible, or at least very expensive.--

On page 2, please delete the third full paragraph.

On page 5, please replace the first full paragraph with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Noise absorption layer 6 is constructed from multiple superimposed plies of a knitted aluminium fabric, in which the plies are compressed to create a mat 10 that is air and gas permeable. Mat 10 is constructed from at least five superimposed plies of knitted aluminium fabric. Mat 10 is an essentially flat formation with relatively high bending strength. A portion of such a mat 10 is shown in Figure 2. The plate-like mat 10 or noise absorption layer 6 has a plurality of small, branched openings or narrow channels 11. In effect, mat 10 thus forms a microporous structure with a plurality of small, open pores. The thickness of noise absorption layer 6 or mat 10 is in the range from 0.5 to 10 mm, preferably in the range from 0.5 to 3 mm. It

has a weight per unit area in the range of 8 to 15 g/dm². The flow resistance per unit length of mat 10 is equal to or greater than 5 kNs/m⁴, preferably equal to or greater than 20 kNs/m⁴ in accordance with DIN 52213.--